

Filed for intro on 05/29/2001

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 516
By West

A RESOLUTION To honor the Whitland area neighborhood on
being one of the most historic areas of
Tennessee.

WHEREAS, The Tennessee General Assembly is proud to specially recognize
Tennessee's most historic neighborhoods; and

WHEREAS, With a 200+ year history, the Whitland area neighborhood is one of the
most historic in Tennessee; and

WHEREAS, The borders of the Whitland area include West End Avenue, Bowling
Avenue, Brighton, South Wilson, along the property line of Montgomery Bell Academy, back to
West End; and

WHEREAS, The area streets include Bowling, Brighton, Carden, Cantrell, Craighead,
Leonard, South Wilson, West End Avenue and Whitland Avenue; and

WHEREAS, Archaeological evidence has shown that the earliest residents of the
Whitland Area were the Mississippian Indians; and

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WHEREAS, On June 26, 1793, the state of North Carolina made a grant of 640 acres, including this neighborhood, to Francis Hodge; and

WHEREAS, On June 8, 1797, Joseph Erwin purchased 540 acres of this original land grant for \$2,500 and had what became known as "Peach Blossom," a Georgian mansion and one of the first brick homes in the area, built in 1801-1803; and

WHEREAS, The dwelling had a 50-foot entrance hall containing double galleries and a beautiful spiral stairway opposite the front door; and

WHEREAS, "Peach Blossom" rapidly became a gathering place for the socially elite of Nashville, including a young attorney, Andrew Jackson; and

WHEREAS, One of the daughters of Joseph and Lavenia Erwin, Jane, married another young lawyer, Charles Dickinson, who at the time was a friend of Jackson; and

WHEREAS, A dispute between Jackson and Dickinson over a horse race led to a duel, in which Jackson, who, although severely wounded, killed Dickinson; and

WHEREAS, In 1829, Joseph Erwin sold 100 acres of the Erwin plantation to Andrew Hynes who then sold the land to Charles Bosley; and

WHEREAS, A granddaughter, Gertrude Bosley Bowling, married John Leonard Whitworth, who added to Peach Blossom in the 1880s. The property was known as "Whitworth Farms" during this period; and

WHEREAS, The Whitland area was later owned by both John Whitworth's son, Charles, and his daughter, Gertrude, who married Dr. R. W. Grizzard; and

WHEREAS, In 1910, a corporation, the "Whitland Realty Company," was formed which subdivided the property and sold it in individual lots; and

WHEREAS, In 1911, Edgehill, an Italianate home originally built in 1879, was moved to the neighborhood; still located on Bowling Avenue, it was the home of Charles Thompson, who founded Thompson and Company, which became Nashville's most prominent merchant for silver, china, furs, woolens, linens and laces; and

WHEREAS, From 1920-1928, the Fugitives Literary Group, one of the most influential groups of poets and writers of the twentieth century, met at the home of James Frank, located at 3802 Whitland Avenue; the group included Robert Penn Warren, the author of *All the King's Men*; and

WHEREAS, In 1980, under the astute leadership of John Walker, the Whitland Area Neighborhood Association was formed; the Association has promoted area beautification, crime prevention, a juvenile offender community service work program, storm water management efforts, a newsletter, neighborhood history research and social occasions; and

WHEREAS, Public servants who were residents of the area include Senator Luke Lea, Congressmen "Buck" Loser, Bob Clement, Governor Frank Clement, Governor Lamar Alexander, Deputy Governor Justin Wilson, Mayor and Congressman Dick Fulton, Mayor Ben West, Mayor Tom Cummings, Vice-Mayors Jay West and Ronnie Steine, and State Representatives Clarence Pete Phillips, Ben West, and Harold W. Bradley; and

WHEREAS, Entertainers included Dawn Wells, star of the very popular television show *Gilligan's Island*; Dinah Shore, singer, entertainer and television host; Francis Craig, big band leader, radio performer and composer of *Near You*, the number one hit of 1947, the first such hit in Nashville history; and Phil Harris, big band leader and longtime sidekick of Jack Benny on radio and television; and

WHEREAS, Area sports heroes included Bill Wade, star quarterback for Montgomery Bell Academy, Vanderbilt University, the Los Angeles Rams and the Chicago Bears and Vice-President of Third National Bank; Coach Dan McGuggin, the greatest football coach in Vanderbilt University history; Coach Fielding Yost, one of the best football coaches in the illustrious history of Michigan and longtime *Nashville Banner* Sports Editor and writer, Fred Russell; and

WHEREAS, Additional persons who were important in Tennessee and Nashville history include C. W. Phillips, who served with distinction as Tennessee Highway Commissioner from

1939-1948; George F. McCanless, who served as Attorney General and Reporter from 1954-1968; and two members of the Potter family, Edward, who founded Commerce Union Bank and Justin, who was an industrialist and financier; and.

WHEREAS, Two of Nashville's most historic schools, Montgomery Bell Academy, formerly established in 1867 and West End, built in 1937, are on either end of the Whitland Area; and

WHEREAS, Two of Nashville's most historic churches, Vine Street Christian, which traces its beginnings to 1830 and Blakemore United Methodist Church, which was started in April, 1890, are also very important in area history; and

WHEREAS, This relatively small neighborhood has more historical markers than any other in Davidson County; and

WHEREAS, This General Assembly is proud to salute the 200+ year history of this very historic neighborhood; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED SECOND GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, That we specially recognize the residents, both past and present, who have made the Whitland Area Neighborhood one of the most historic in Tennessee, and we are confident that this rich heritage will continue to grow.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That appropriate copies of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copies.